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THE COPENHAGEN EYE CLINIC FOR THE MENTALLY RETARDED

Sognevej 40, Copenhagen, 2820 Gentofte, Denmark

ANNUAL REPORT

1973

Clinical Work

In 1973 we examined 310 patients and gave 415 consultations. At the end of the year, 273 were on the check list for 1974 and 270 on the waiting list.

It is a great pleasure to report that from January 1, 1974 the staff of the Eye Clinic will consist of a full-time ophthalmologist, assisted by two part-time secretaries. We hope that this will effectively reduce our waiting list.

Registration of Blind and Partially Sighted Patients

Registration of blind and partially sighted patients who are also mentally retarded was continued and, as expected, new cases were found.

By the end of 1973, we had collected information of 469 mentally retarded persons with a visual handicap. The distribution appears from Table 1.

We are fairly certain that we have not yet traced all visually handicapped persons who are also mentally retarded. The present information shows that the frequency of this double handicap is about 1:8 or 15 per cent among the retarded children in institutions. This is much higher than previously thought.

Co-operation with Other Institutions

The unexpected high frequency of blindness and low vision among our patients stresses the importance of our co-operation with the school for the blind in Denmark. In 1973 we increased our mutual assistance, and by the end of 1973, 170 mentally retarded children had been visited by itinerant teachers from the blind

school. These teachers can ask for ophthalmological assistance from the Eye Clinic in Copenhagen, and this was given in a number of cases.

The co-operation with the cytogenetic and metabolic laboratories at the John F. Kennedy Institution was continued.

The Spielmeyer-Vogt (Batten) working group had only a few meetings during the year.

We expect to start ophthalmological genetic counselling at the Eye Clinic from the beginning of 1974. This service will be open to patients referred from ophthalmologists, institutions for the mentally retarded and from geneticists.

Instruction

1. Tapeto-retinal degenerations, lecture given to physicians specialising in ophthalmology (Linköping, Sweden).
2. Rehabilitation of the blind, postgraduate instruction given to physicians.
3. "Oligophrenia - selected syndromes". This series of brief educational articles in the Danish medical journal Ugeskrift for Læger was continued and edited at the Eye Clinic.
4. Mongolism, Down's syndrome. A film providing cytogenetic and ophthalmological instruction to physicians and nursing staffs was produced by Drs. Mikkelsen and Warburg and distributed by "DUMEX".

Lectures

Tapeto-retinal degenerations, Örebro 1973.

Maculopathies, Örebro 1973.

Metabolic eye diseases, Örebro 1973.

Genetic counselling of retinoblastoma families. XXI Scandinavian meeting of ophthalmologists.

Norrie's disease - Five new cases. XXI Scandinavian meeting of ophthalmologists.

Genetic heterogeneity of the retinitis pigmentosa group. I meeting of the European Paediatric Ophthalmology Group, Oxford 1973.

The X chromosome and the eye. Dutch Society of Human Genetics 1973.

Norrie's disease. Diagnostic considerations in sporadic cases.
University of Groningen, Holland 1973.

Publication

Social and medical welfare for the blind and partially sighted
in Denmark (In Danish). Månedsskrift for praktisk
lægegerning 1973:51:26.

METTE WARBURG, M.D.

Ophthalmologist

BIRTHE LINELL

Secretary

KIRSTEN RATHSACH

secretary

Table 1

Present (Dec. 1973) information of the distribution of visually handicapped persons in Danish institutions for the mentally retarded.

<u>Blind</u>	Children	Adults	Total
Copenhagen	78	16	94
Extrametropolitan	102	86	185
<u>Total</u>	180	102	279

<u>Partially Sighted</u>			
Copenhagen	45	65	110
Extrametropolitan	46	34	80
<u>Total</u>	91	99	190

Visually handicapped			
<u>Total</u>	279	201	480

Institutionalised			
<u>Total</u>	1165	7700	8865